

THE PACIFIC

Commercial Advertiser

WALTER G. SMITH - EDITOR

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Not much is said about the tariff in the Democratic platforms but it is still at work turning out prosperity at the old stand.

The birthday of the Emperor of China was celebrated by the Bow Wongs but the chances are if the brother of the sun and moon is still alive he did not get an opening to celebrate on his own account. The popular impression is that when the Chinese Emperor gets merry and gay he is sent to bed in the dark.

If we understand the Hawaiian Democratic position it is that the ex-Royalists should join the party which has driven Grover Cleveland out of its councils and do it in gratitude for the services Cleveland might have rendered the Queen if he had not been prevented by the threat of Democratic revolt.

It is the lack of linemen to perfect the installation of the new telephone system which accounts for the trouble people are having with their messages. Linemen cannot be got from San Francisco and have been sent for in Chicago. If they come the change from the old to the new telephone systems will be quickly made; if not, customers must wait.

Whether the United States keeps the Philippines or not it has made a lasting impression there. For the first time the Tagals have learned what is meant by an honest police and street-cleaning system, a sure postoffice and incorruptible courts. In small things the change is as marked as in large ones. For example all the houses in Manila are being numbered and the people are already pleased with the convenience.

It is a matter of surprise to travelers that the red-skinned banana of Cuba is not grown here. Years ago no other kind was used in the Eastern market owing to its exorbitant creamy flavor and fine grain. At present the yellow banana has been forced on the Eastern trade because the percentage of loss in its transportation is less than that of the red variety. This reason would not affect Hawaiian consumers who ought to have the best banana grown for their table use. Probably a little correspondence on the subject with the Department of Agriculture would be profitable.

The steamers which the Northern Pacific railroad will put on between Seattle and Oriental ports will probably be the largest ever seen on the Pacific ocean. It was at first proposed to give them each a tonnage of 10,000, but the plans were built up until the ships will carry 20,000 tons and have a measurement capacity of 28,000 tons. What this means can best be seen in comparison. The Campania and Lucania are both Atlantic liners of the first class, the measured tonnage of each being 14,000. Hence the new ships will each be double the size of the Campania type. According to the Review of Reviews the deck room will cover five acres and hold 1500 carloads of freight. To load one of the big ships expeditiously twenty miles of trackage are now being laid at the Seattle terminal.

THE RISKS OF CONTACT.

We are surprised to find this paragraph in the Star's article on leper segregation:

"That the permission for friends to go and visit friends is an unwise one, almost every one will grant. But that it will spread the disease is a point upon which there may be much controversy. A single contact, unless one has an open wound to which the leprosy virus can be communicated from an open sore, is probably as harmless as brushing one's hand over a patient suffering from grippe."

There is no justice in comparing the kind of contact permitted between visitors at the Leper Settlement and their stricken friends with the mere act of brushing one's hand over a grip patient. The affectionate Hawaiian, meeting a member of his family long immured at Molokai does not touch finger tips or lips in cold and formal salutation. Men were seen at the Leper Settlement on Saturday last kissing their diseased wives or sisters or daughters for an hour at a time and kissing them in a passionate ecstasy of grief. Who can say that the mucous membrane of the visitor, most sensitive of tissues, did not absorb poison? Who can say that the germs of decay in the one found no lodgment in the system of the other? Scientific opinion by no means agrees that leprosy cannot be taken as the bubonic plague or the glanders are taken. People receive it in unaccountable ways and because of this, segregation is insisted upon, the very hardworking of the lepers and the money they use is fumigated before it passes into clean hands and visitors to the Settlement are urged to protect themselves even from the casual handshake. Theoretically and to a large extent practically the authorities in charge of Molokai insist that the infected and uninfected shall remain apart; but with fatal indiscretion they give up one day in the year to family reunions in which the well and clean take an extremity of risk in personal contact with the dying victims of nature's most incurable disease. It is absurd to say that because in some cases the risk is run safely that in others it will not work a dreadful harm. Some are more susceptible to leprosy than others as they are to any other form of plague; we cannot pick these out; we may only protect them by raising a barrier between the clean and unclean that no man may pass. It is for such a barrier we appeal with the Legislature as the first recourse; but if that body fails to act or acts unfavorably then the help of Congress may be sought. It would not take long if the Federal Government knew of the laxity of the present system to bring about a drastic change in its character and personnel.

THE PROHIBITIONISTS.

One of the declarations of the Prohibition party's platform adopted at Chicago reads: "President McKinley has done more to encourage the liquor business, to demoralize the temperance habits of young men and to bring Christian practices and requirements into disrepute than any other president this republic has had."

Exaggeration is the common vice of great moral movements and it accounts in some degree for the fact that the Prohibition party was reduced from the third to the fifth place in national politics by the election of 1896. People who never drink alcoholic beverages and who would like to see the traffic in them suppressed declined to have anything to do with a movement that was as fanatical in some of its ways as the one which sent the selectmen of Salem out at night with lanterns to watch for witches on broomsticks.

Every reasoning person knows that President McKinley has done nothing intentionally to encourage the liquor business or to demoralize young men. What the Prohibitionists mean is that he has executed the people's will as expressed in an Act of Congress permitting the sale of light wines and beer in Army garrisons. But was this a bad thing for temperance? Before that law was enacted soldiers who drank went to the low grogeries and bootleggers that skirted all Army reservations on the Mainland and spent their earnings on the poisons there dispensed. Murder, robbery and vagabondage were the three graces at the feasts and the morale of the Army was nearly ruined. Finally at the earnest request of our military officers, especially surgeons, Congress undertook to regulate the sale of wine and beer to soldiers and check the use of spirits, by establishing "canteens." In these places no soldier was tempted to over-indulgence; what beverages he got were mild and pure and he was kept from drunkenness. The percentage of army drinking fell off and the liquor trade, especially the retail part of it, protested bitterly. So marked was the improvement in the young men of Uncle Sam's service that Congress, though importuned by enormous petitions to abolish the canteen, has refused to do so.

Upon these points we note the following comments in Harper's Weekly, a journal which surely cannot be called an organ of the rum-sellers:

Believing that the persons who knew best about the effect of the canteen on the soldier were the officers of the army, the War Department lately asked the opinions of the commanding officers of troops, batteries, companies, and regiments as to the effect of the canteen system, and especially of the sale of beer, on the morality and discipline of the enlisted men. The replies of commanding officers in the Philippines have not yet been received, but about fifteen hundred answers from other officers have come in, and of these the number opposed to the canteen system is about forty. The rest heartily approve the carefully regulated sale of beer, on the ground that it keeps the men away from saloons and evil resorts outside the posts, and promotes temperance and good discipline.

These reports will presently be printed, and will be obtainable by persons who care to see them. It is very much to be hoped that conscientious persons who have agitated, and expect to agitate further, for the abolition of the canteen system will procure and read them. It seems to the Weekly impossible that the testimony they offer as to the merits of the present system, and the evils that preceded it and which would follow its destruction, can fail to convince reasonable people in and out of Congress that it makes for righteousness and sobriety to let the canteen system alone.

Contrast these statements with the fanatical charge that President McKinley "has done more to encourage the liquor business, to demoralize the temperance habits of young men and to bring Christian practices and requirements into disrepute than any other President this republic has had."

The attitude of the Prohibitionists reminds us of the attitude of their spiritual forebears, the Abolitionists, towards Abraham Lincoln—the one man whom Wendell Phillips, the great orator of the anti-slavery movement, delighted to grill over the fires of his rhetoric. "Lincoln," said Phillips in Faneuil Hall, "is the slavehound of Illinois." That was because the future great Emancipator did not see his way clear to act on the slavery question contrary to good policy and public sentiment; he would not launch the ship of reform while the waters were at an ebb. It was his desire, as we quote the words of Lamartine, "to place his bark on the highest promontory of the beach and wait for the rising of the tide to make it float." Events proved the wisdom of his course. When he declined to interfere with slavery in still-loyal States lest they might be driven to rebel, Wm. Lloyd Garrison called him a "time-server" and a "poltroon." Erratic Horace Greeley called the flag "a flaunting lie, whose stripes are bloody scars," and vied with the Richmond Times in inventing epithets of hate for Lincoln. Greeley even demanded the dissolution of the Federal compact so as to let the "erring sisters" take slavery with themselves out of the Union—a sentiment which Wendell Phillips repeated and applauded. The demand of the Abolitionists was for "immediate and unconditional abolition," but it was never achieved. Finally, as a war-measure, Lincoln proclaimed the slaves free in all rebellious States and the Garrisonian prints assailed him as one who, in excepting loyal border States, had "made a covenant with death and a league with hell." Even when complete emancipation came the Abolitionists were not satisfied because, forsooth, it had not been done in their way. It was done, in fact, in spite of them—in spite of their calumnious misrepresentation, in spite of the obstacles placed in Abraham Lincoln's path.

If prohibition ever comes to pass it will come not by fanatical edict but by the growth of healthy moral sentiment. It is no small advantage to win drinking men away from whisky and rum to wine and beer—to the border land of temperance—and later we may hope to win them from wine and beer to the beverages that in quenching the thirst do not inflame the blood. But these things take time. The drinking of alcohol is one of the oldest habits of the human race but as morals improve and intelligence expands it may vanish in the limbo of other ancient customs. All good men hope so, but most good men cherish small faith in methods which seek to regulate appetite by law and condemn with unsparring hand those who believe that moral reform is a growth and not a fiat—that it must

come by degrees and not as an avalanche.

If the President calls Congress together to make war on China the Democrats will shout "Imperialism." If he doesn't they will say he has deserted the missionaries. What Bryan would do under the same circumstances is a merely impertinent query which they had rather be shot than answer.

OF CURRENT INTEREST.

The Copper Roof Thief.

As visitors to the Philadelphia convention left the grounds for the homeward journey they passed by the all-sun-house and were reminded by out-cries of the day when Major Phipps, superintendent of that institution, conceived the notion that a copper roof was of no use to the community of unfortunates, and that it would be a patriotic act to remove it and substitute one of zinc. Smiting the act to the notion, re-actors Victor Smith, Phipps appropriated tons of copper that comprised the old roof and charged the cost of the zinc substitute to the county. At that time copper was immensely valuable, and certain politicians whose advice was not asked and who, inadvisedly, were not called in to share the profits of the change, determined to make trouble for Phipps but they were a little slow. The major sold his roof and went to Canada. Every paper in Philadelphia sent its best man to Canada to report the proceedings for the extradition of Phipps, District Attorney Graham presenting the argument before the Canadian authorities. He was opposed by the ablest crown lawyers in the dominion, but succeeded in carrying his point. Phipps was brought back to Philadelphia, tried, convicted and sentenced to serve a term of five years in the penitentiary. All this for stealing a copper roof. The city editor of the Ledger was one of the bright newspaper men who came to Canada to help Graham. In expressing resentment of a remark made by a Canadian official regarding the royal prerogatives he exclaimed with animation, "Oh, to—with the queen." This less majesty caused his arrest and incarceration in a deep, dark dungeon, and it required not only the finesse of Graham, but many dollars of George W. Childs, as well as all the political influence that could be brought to bear upon the Canadian government through the administration at Washington, to secure his release.

School Growth in Seventy Years.

It is not quite seventy years since there was no school in the limits of Chicago. The first schoolhouse was built by a woman, at her own expense, in 1831. Ten years later there were four district schools, with four teachers, each receiving \$400 a year. For the last school year the total appropriations were over \$7,000,000. There are 250 public school houses with 5,000 teachers and over 255,000 pupils, including eight high schools, with 8,800 pupils. There are three universities, one of which has an endowment of \$4,000,000, and another of \$11,000,000. Nearly all the leading denominations have theological seminaries there, and there are a large number of technical and special schools.

Briti h Regard for Crane.

The early death of Stephen Crane was noted with sympathy in England. The London Chronicle announced it "with great sorrow," as of one who was expected to do notable things, although he "had not yet fulfilled the promise of his 'Red Badge of Courage.'" He manifested in his last days a courage finer than that of the war spirit he celebrated. A friend who parted with him at Dover, on his way to Baden-Wallen, in the Black Forest, where he died, reports this saying: "When you come to the hedge that we must all go over, it isn't bad. You feel sleepy, and you don't care. Just a little dreamy curiosity as to which world you're really in—that's all."

A Bottle Nursed Seal.

The experiment of rearing a baby seal on a nursing bottle is being tried by Captain Paul Boynton at his home at Coney Island. The seal was born a week or more ago. Its mother died twenty-four hours after its birth, and then it has been fed on condensed and fresh milk. It is nursed at regular intervals in the arms of Captain Boynton. It will not be able to go into water for three weeks. Captain Boynton says that the seal is one of the very few which have been born in captivity in this country and lived. The baby seal is carefully guarded in Captain Boynton's home and is not on exhibition.

Queer Use of Drums in Peking.

The policemen of Peking are, or at least were, armed chiefly with small drums, which they beat loudly in order, it is presumed, to let burglars know that they are coming. All night long the watchmen beat their way around the streets, and as a natural consequence are said to make few arrests. The pigeons of Peking have each a light whistle tied to their tails, which give forth a loud sound as they fly. The blind also use drums to announce their coming and warn other people to get out of their way.

Difference in Child Valuation.

It was a judge in New Jersey a few months ago, who declared that the life of a child, killed by a trolley car, was not worth more than a dollar. In contrast with that estimate a jury in the New York supreme court the other day awarded \$20,000 damages to a 6-year-old boy who was partly paralyzed as a consequence of being run over by a brewery wagon. Children seem to be worth more in New York than in New Jersey, at least in the courts.

Boston's Free Baths.

Boston has already opened its free public baths, and will keep them open until after Labor day. The bath trustees asked the city authorities for \$106,000 for the proper maintenance of the baths, and got only \$70,000. They decided that summer bathing is the greater public necessity, and will spend most of the money for that, making no attempt to keep open the winter baths.

It Was a Paying Deal.

They figure out in Philadelphia that the Republican convention was a splendid business investment, even at the cost of \$100,000. The merchants report a noticeable stimulus to local trade from the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent there by the many thousands of visitors.

Tolstoi Disappointed.

It is said that Tolstoi is far from satisfied with his novel, "Resurrection," which he thinks is too much in the style of his early work but he hopes to do better with a new novel, "White Slavery," in which he will discuss the modern industrial system.

Foster as a Historian.

Ex-Secretary of State John W. Foster has just completed writing a work on American history, which is to appear next fall.

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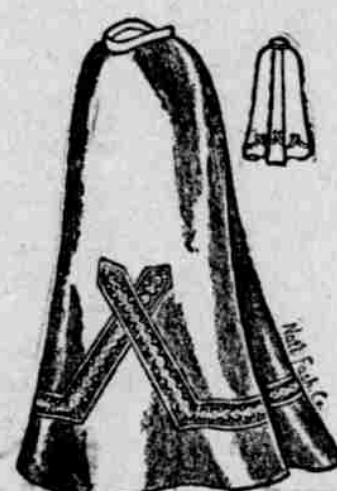
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